SOME STATISTICS RELATING TO BIRTHS IN SOUTH DAKOTA.

The published vital statistics of South Dakota, 1909 to 1913, inclusive, divide the mothers of a given year into two classes according as they give birth in the year to sons or to daughters. Each of these two classes is arranged with respect to increasing age. The same arrangement is followed with respect to the fathers.

The two tables below give some results deduced from these statistics. Ms and Md are abbreviations for mothers of sons and mothers of daughters, respectively. Similarly, for Fs and Fd. The columns headed D and S give the standard deviation and the skewness. The latter is computed with respect to the actual maximum. The column under R gives the range, or the number of years over which births occurred.

The tables are based on more than 63,000 births and covers all the cases for which the appropriate data have been published.

MOTHERS.

Year.	Av. Age Ms.	Av. Age Md.	D. Ms.	D. Md.	S. Ms.	S. Md.	R. Ms.	R. Md.
1909.........	27.9	28.3	6.32	6.37	0.62	0.52	34	35
1910.........	28.5	28.3	6.44	6.45	0.70	0.51	43	40
1911.........	27.8	28.1	6.36	6.35	0.44	0.64	39	27
1912.........	28.3	28.3	6.57	6.36	0.35	0.36	39	35
1913.........	28.2	28.3	6.28	6.37	0.67	0.68	35	36
Mean........	*28.14*	*28.26*	*6.41*	*6.41*	*0.65*	*0.67*		

FATHERS.

Year.	Fs.	Fd.	Fs.	Fd.	Fs.	Fd.	Fs.	Fd.
1909.........	33.2	33.2	7.66	7.83	0.42	0.41	52	52
1910.........	33.1	34.4	7.72	8.01	0.40	0.42	46	55
1911.........	33.1	32.9	7.72	7.93	0.40	0.37	56	56
1912.........	33.3	32.3	7.74	7.75	0.41	0.41	60	52
1913.........	33.3	32.7	7.60	7.69	0.43	0.35	52	46
Mean........	*33.2*	*33.1*	*7.69*	*7.84*	*0.412*	*0.392*		

As a partial restatement of the results in the tables we give the following:

In South Dakota, in the years 1909 to 1913, inclusive, the mothers giving birth to daughters showed less variability in age, in the distribution of age with respect to the yearly average and in the assymmetry of their distribution than did mothers giving birth to sons.

In South Dakota, in the years 1909 to 1913, inclusive, the fathers of sons born in this period were less variable in average age, in the distribution of ages with respect to the yearly average, and in the assymmetry of this distribution than did the fathers of daughters.

Taking the entire period into consideration the average age of mothers of daughters differs less from that of the fathers than does the average age of the mothers of sons differ from that of the fathers.

The average age of the mothers of daughters is greater than that of the mothers of sons and the average age of the fathers of daughters is less than that of the fathers of sons.

T. E. M.

Vermilion, S. D.

"THE HOMICIDE RECORD OF AMERICAN CITIES FOR 1915," THE SPECTATOR, DECEMBER 21, 1916. F. L. HOFFMAN.

Many agencies, both public and private, are indebted to Mr. Hoffman for his annual review of the homicide record in American cities. There is no other source to which one may resort for a general compilation and analysis of statistics relating to this particular crime. True, the Division of Vital Statistics of the United States Census Bureau keeps a record of mortality data throughout the registration area of the United States, but this division is considering homicide merely as one of the many causes of deaths and not as a crime. Mr. Hoffman has used these data as a basis for a study of the amount of homicide considered as a crime. That the only effort to present this branch of criminal statistics for the country as a whole is left to be undertaken year after year by a single individual in unofficial life is no less a tribute to Mr. Hoffman than it is a condemnation of the various agencies of government which should be concerned with accumulating and interpreting this information. It is to be hoped that while Mr. Hoffman continues to fill the breach, by his presentation of this branch of criminal statistics, a stimulus may be given to other agencies, particularly governmental, to appreciate the value of such record information, and to undertake the preparation of this and other branches of criminal statistics on a comprehensive scale.

Mr. Hoffman has used the scattered returns of prison statistics prepared by the Census Bureau and the mortality returns of the Division of Vital Statistics of the Census Bureau and of municipal departments of health. The prison statistics of 1890 and 1910 relate to a point of time, showing the number of prisoners in confinement on a given day. But while the statistics of these enumerations speak a point of time, they really deal with a period of time, since the prisoners were brought into confinement on separate occasions, ranging over a long period. This period is indefinite and unknown. The Census Bureau investigation of June 1, 1890, shows that there were 7,386 prisoners in the United States charged with homicide, or 9 per cent. of the total number of prisoners under confinement; and again, a census return of January 1, 1910, shows 6,904 prisoners who were charged with first degree homicide, and 7,412 for second degree homicide, making a total of 14,316. By preparing a population ratio, Mr. Hoffman shows that the number of prisoners held on these charges was 156 per 1,000,000 inhabitants in 1910, as against 117 per 1,000,000 in 1890. On this basis the assumption is made that "in the direction of the security of the person there has been decided retrogression." For the purpose of